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AUTHORITY

AGO ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (6 Aug 68) FOR OT RD 682316

15 August 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 79th Engineer Group (Const), Period Ending 30 April 1968 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure that the Army realizes current benefits from lessons learned during recent operations.

3. To insure that the information provided through the Lessons Learned Program is readily available on a continuous basis, a cumulative Lessons Learned Index containing alphabetical listings of items appearing in the reports is compiled and distributed periodically. Recipients of the attached report are encouraged to recommend items from it for inclusion in the Index by completing and returning the self-addressed form provided at the end of this report.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 79TH ENGINEER GROUP
APO 96491

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of 79th Engineer Group (Construction) for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

THRU: Commanding General
20th Engineer Brigade
ATTN: AVBI-OPN
APO 96491

Commanding General
United States Army, Vietnam
ATTN: AVHEN-MO
APO 96307

Commanding General
United States Army Pacific
ATTN: GPOP-OT
APO 96588

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army (ACSFOR DA)
Washington, D. C. 20310

Section I. Significant Organization Activities

A. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 79th Engineer Group

1. General: Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 79th Engineer Group (Construction) remained stationed at the "Plantation Compound" in Long Binh throughout the reporting period.

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This reporting period literally started with a bang, as the 79th Engineer Group spent the first few days defending its perimeters while the enemy's Tet Offensive brought all units within the Group under fire. The men of the Group Headquarters manned their perimeter with enthusiasm and professionalism, anxious to fulfill their role in engaging the enemy. Prior planning, timely intelligence, good defensive positions, and the outstanding esprit and discipline of the men successfully thwarted the enemy's attacks.

The Tet Offensive resulted in considerable damage to the Group Headquarters facilities and precipitated some much-needed construction. Extensive damage to the headquarters building, due largely to the concussion from an explosion in the Long Binh Ammunition Storage Facility, was repaired and major modifications were incorporated. A foyer was constructed to serve as a lounge for in-processing personnel - this proved to be a great help in alleviating the crowded conditions in the personnel section and affording a place for transients to wait in comfort while processing during inclement weather.

The foyer is also temporarily being used for Sunday chapel services. There was an obvious need for a Group conference room, the construction of which has already proven its worth many times over. The reorganization of office space within the headquarters building has paid dividends in efficiency and comfort. Perhaps the most significant construction undertaken this quarter at Group Headquarters was the new tactical operations center. The Tet Offensive clearly demonstrated the need for a secure area from which operations could be directed on a 24-hour basis during hostile actions. The new TOC is a sandbag-hardened, reinforced concrete block structure which houses the communication facilities (radio and land line) and affords space for the commander and key staff members to carry out their functions in directing operations during an enemy attack. During non-hostile conditions the TOC is used by the duty officer and permanently houses the radio room and switchboard. Improvement of the defensive perimeter and ready reaction plans is a continuing process.

The Group effort for the reporting period was characterized by extensive maintenance, repair and construction of lines of communication coupled with continuous operational support missions for the tactical units within the 79th Engineer Group area of responsibility. As the quarter drew to a close, extensive effort was placed on preparation for the coming monsoon season. Along with the rain comes an increased expenditure of effort on base camp development, planning for which is currently fully underway.

2. Command: Major changes included the departure of Major Paul

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Kavanaugh, Group S-1, to CONUS; the arrival of Major Kenneth E. Halleran as the new S-1; the departure of Major James J. Callahan, the Group S-4, to CONUS; and the arrival of Major Clayton S. Gates as the new S-4. Captain Roosevelt Scott, Group Maintenance Officer, departed for CONUS and was replaced by Captain James M. Wilkins. In addition to changes in members of the principal staff, Captain (now Major) John Whisler was reassigned to the 34th Engineer Battalion as S-3 and was replaced by Captain John M. Wattendorf as the new Group Assistant S-3. Captain Wilbur Gregory assumed duties as Engineer Supply Officer in the S-4 Section. First Lieutenant Gerald Froelich was assigned as Headquarters Company Commander and First Lieutenant Richard L. Darden became the Group Personnel Officer.

3. Personnel, Administration, Morale and Discipline: During the reporting period the Group not only received a large number of replacements, but also experienced a large loss of personnel in view of the rotational humps in March and April. A total of 2,488 replacements were received: 893 in February, 303 in March, and 1,292 in April. A total of 2,366 personnel returned to CONUS. However, in view of the large number of replacements received in February and April, major rotational humps have again developed for next year. A carefully planned infusion program is currently being developed for next year. A carefully planned infusion program is currently being developed within the Group to insure that no unit will lose more than 15% of its personnel in any single 30 day period. This will require infusion with units outside of the Group, and coordination with 20th Engineer Brigade is currently underway.

The overall officer strength continued to be high, but the manning level for officers in the grade of Captain fell sharply from 72.8% at the beginning of the period to 47.5% at the end of the reporting period. There are currently rotational humps for officers in August 1968 and March 1969. This will result in infusion with units outside of the Group and a program is currently being developed by Group and coordinated with 20th Engineer Brigade.

Despite a relatively high casualty rate, morale within the 79th Engineer Group continued at a high level during the reporting period as exemplified by the high rate of production and evident good spirit.

During the reporting period the Group suffered 14 killed in action, 205 wounded in action, and one (1) missing in action. A total of 379 decorations were awarded to members of the Group including 1 Silver Star, 31 Bronze Stars for Valor, one Air Medal for Valor, and 31 Army Commendation Medals for Valor.

During the reporting period, the 79th Engineer Group experienced a

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total of 235 Article 15's, a drop from the 264 cases during the last reporting period; there were 7 Summary Courts Martial, an increase from the 4 during the last period; Special Courts Martial were down, a total of 10 cases as compared with 15 during the last quarter; no General Courts Martial were experienced. Cases of venereal disease reported during this reporting period dropped significantly with a total of 155 reported cases as compared with 235 cases reported during the last reporting period. There was a major increase in Congressional inquiries, a total of 34 as compared with 16 during the last quarter. An analysis was made of the causes of these inquiries and, although many were not initiated by soldiers themselves, a significant number were. Command emphasis was directed to a strong program of information to personnel to re-emphasize the availability of the chain of command and unit inspectors general to whom problems and complaints could be presented. Many of the complaints were minor and could have been solved at the lowest echelons of the chain of command. In several cases, personnel were not aware of the availability of members of the chain of command for problems and complaints. It is anticipated that with strong command interest in this area, a significant drop should materialize during the next quarter.

4. Intelligence and Counterintelligence: The 79th Engineer Group Headquarters continues to distribute intelligence documents from the 20th Engineer Brigade, II FFORCEV, and higher headquarters. Spot reports of enemy actions are forwarded to the 20th Engineer Brigade and II FFORCEV. This headquarters continues to handle personnel security actions, e.g., validation of clearances up to and including TOP SECRET, granting of CONFIDENTIAL clearances and approval of interim clearances up to and including TOP SECRET. The subordinate battalions are granted the same clearance validation and granting authority as Group.

The reconnaissance effort within the Group continued in support of tactical operations, and proposed and actual LOC maintenance. Prior to all operations, reconnaissances are conducted and engineer work estimates drawn up for all LOC's in the area of operations.

Periodic inspections of airfields in the Group area of responsibility continued during the quarter despite occasional difficulty in arranging transportation for the inspection teams.

5. Plans, Operations, and Training: The 79th Engineer Group continued to fulfill operational requirements and work on cantonment construction and other MCA funded projects during the quarter.

Typical of the dry season, effort continued with emphasis on lines of communication and operational support missions. Sweep operations,

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clearing and repairing enemy interdictions, and the general repair and maintenance of lines of communication required continued effort. The variety of operational support missions covered the spectrum from combat support missions to fire support base construction.

Of special interest was the priority mission to emplace a 930' tactical bridge (M4T6) on the Song Dong Nai River in the southern portion of War Zone D. The mission was conducted by A Company of the 168th Engineer Battalion (Combat) supported by the 100th Engineer Company (FB), 573d Engineer Company (FB), E Company, 15th Engineer Battalion, and E Company, 1st Engineer Battalion. The operation proved to be a very challenging one and was successfully accomplished on time. The bridge was extracted immediately after the tactical crossing of over 150 tracked vehicles for which it had been constructed. A considerable number of valuable lessons were learned as a result of this operation, and an agressive program of bridge training was initiated to insure professionalism on quick-reaction bridging operations.

The maintenance of airfields remains a continuing effort and is largely responsible for the constant demand on airmobile equipment.

During the latter half of the reporting period, when the Tet Offensive had been broken and traffic began to return to normal, the Group began extensive preparations for the coming rainy season. The tempo was most noticeably increased in the effort to haul and stockpile materials for projects planned during the rainy season and for the priority project of constructing the Saigon Bypass from Cu Chi to Phu Coung. In addition, emphasis was placed on finishing horizontal construction so that vertical construction could proceed without delay during the rainy season.

During the reporting period new cantonment directives were published for Phu Loi, Di An, Lai Khe, and Cu Chi. The scopes of these directives were a result of the USARV Ad Hoc Base Development Study. The result was a decrease in scope of most facilities.

The USARV Ad Hoc Base Development Study Group published the results of their reviews of the base development programs at Phu Loi, Phouc Vinh, and Bien Hoa. As in the case of previous reviews, the decrease in scopes of the cantonments would be a decrease of approximately two (2) battalion months of construction at each cantonment.

Training with the M16A1 rifle became an area of particular emphasis during this reporting period, which resulted in the implementation of aggressive training programs in all units having personnel armed with

the weapon. As part of the contingency planning for defense of the Group Headquarters, selected personnel were trained in the use and employment of the M72 LAW (Light Anti-Tank Weapon). Emphasis was placed on the proper development and use of range cards to further enhance the professionalism of the perimeter defense system. A training program has been implemented whereby each month a different combat engineer company will receive a three-day training period on the M4T6 bridge. The training will put the emphasis on supervisory personnel with particular attention to proper planning, organization and supervision. Two of the three days will be a practical exercise consisting of the erection and removal of a bridge.

Training remains an area of command interest in order to maintain professional competence in all endeavors.

6. Logistics: Twenty-one (21) major items of equipment were declared combat losses as a result of enemy action, of which only 11 were replaced. Items not replaced to date are 4 ea D7E tractors, 1 ea VRC-46 radio, 2 ea 2½ ton trucks, 1 ea PRC-25 radio, and 2 ea 5 ton trucks.

Replacement of several major items of TOE equipment remains unsatisfactory. Relief has been obtained in some of the areas deemed critical during the last report period; e.g., scoop loaders and graders. The following are some of the current critical shortages:

ITEM	AUTH	O/H	% FILL
Tractor, D7E	98	89	91
Cranes	42	37	88
Dump Truck, 5T	326	304	93
Compressor, 250 CFM	32	21	66
Semi-Trailer, 25T	117	104*	89
Tractor, 10T	82	11**	13
Bridgeboats, 27'	10	5***	50

* It has been reported that 10 trailers will be received soon.

** 40 ea 5 ton tractors issued ILO 10 ton tractors.

*** One combat loss was incurred on 26 April, for a net requirement of 6 boats. A new replacement model is reported due in May.

9.

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Availability of construction materials has generally been satisfactory during this period with, again, exceptions of some plumbing and electrical items, lumber 3" or greater in dimension, and structural steel bridge materials (e.g., 36 WF 230 stringers).

On 20 February 1968, the Group was granted a request for contract rock haul of approximately 42,000 cubic meters of crushed rock from the University Quarry, Long Binh to Cu Chi, RVN. Because of the Tet Offensive, contractor employees did not move significant rock quantities until late March. To date 12,000 cubic meters of rock have been hauled by contract to Cu Chi. Even with this additional capability for hauling, however, total hauling capacity remained critically short during the period. At present, the Group has a total of 280,000 tons of aggregate and 41,000 cubic yards of sand on commercial contract.

The food service section is in full operation. Monthly food service inspections are being conducted by the food service supervisor in each of the 24 mess halls of the 79th Engineer Group. Quarterly reviews of mess accounts are being conducted on one-third of all mess halls each month, whether the mess is operated in cantonment or field environment.

Command emphasis has continued in areas of supply accountability and reports of survey. During the period 40 reports of survey were initiated, compared to 51 for the last reporting period. It is anticipated that this number will decrease substantially during the next quarter. Two 79th Engineer Group Regulations dealing with property and supply accountability were published during the reporting period. 79th Engineer Group Regulation 735-2, dated 10 February 1968, concerns combat loss accountability, reporting and replacement procedures; 79th Engineer Group Regulation 405-4, dated 3 March 1968; "Control of Construction Resources", gives guidance on issue and control of construction materials.

During the reporting period, the maintenance section placed primary emphasis on assistance to subordinate units in areas of maintenance management, material readiness, PLL, and shop operation and safety. Expediting repair parts has also remained an important function of the section. Throughout the reporting period the average deadline rates of engineer and ordnance equipment were 7.0% and 3.4% respectively, with an average overall deadline rate of 5.0%. The average critical item deadline rate (as defined in 20th Engineer Brigade Regulation 750-4) was 10.3%. Generally, half of the deadlined items require direct support maintenance; one of every four items requiring DS maintenance is deadlined for over 30 days before being returned to service or turned in for lack of repair parts. The two most critical maintenance

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problem areas encountered during the reporting period were repair or replacement of the D7E tractor engine and the 5 ton dump truck multi-fuel engine. Altogether, during the reporting period 43 D7E tractors and 100 5-ton dump trucks were deadlined for engines. Of these, the close of the reporting period finds the Group with 3 D7E tractors and 32 5-ton dump trucks deadlined for engines. An analysis of reasons for these deadlines is being conducted, and the Maintenance Section continues to work closely with both the Continental Motors representative and the 29th General Support Group to resolve difficulties encountered in repair or replacement of engines and to preclude a continuing high deadline rate.

On 24 April, First Lieutenant Edwin J. Sullivan was reassigned from the 554th Engineer Battalion to Group Headquarters to serve as the Group Materiel Readiness Expediter. This position is not authorized by TOE; but it has been recognized by USARV as required to combat the serious operational problems caused by shortages of repair parts, major items, and construction material. It has been found that MRE's can often solve these problems by discovering un-inventoried stock in out-of-the-way places and by cutting through channels to get an item where it is required earlier than would otherwise be the case.

7. Force Development: A Company, 27th Engineer Battalion, was returned to its parent unit early in the reporting period as the majority of the 101st Airborne Division commenced operations in another corps tactical zone. The 34th Engineer Battalion (Construction) was relocated from Bien Hoa to Phu Loi in order to support tactical unit requirements more effectively.

It was determined that Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 79th Engineer Group, the 104th Engineer Company (DT), the 27th Engineer Land Clearing Team, and the 362d Engineer Company (LE) did not have adequate personnel authorized to meet the mission requirements of the Group. In order to maintain these units at required strength, formal target strengths were developed which increase the manning level of the three aforementioned units at the expense of all other Group units.

During the reporting period an excessive overage within Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 79th Engineer Group was reduced to proposed MTOE strength. The primary cause of the over-strength situation was the replacement of key enlisted personnel as much as 30 days prior to DEROS of the incumbent. An overlap of from 3 to 8 days is considered adequate.

8. Command Management: No change from last report.

9. Inspector General: As anticipated by the Group Pre-IG Team, consisting of the Group Executive Officer and representatives of the Group

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Staff, the results of the Annual General Inspection of the 66th Engineer Company (TOPO), and the 34th Engineer Battalion (Construction), were most favorable; both units received satisfactory reports. In addition, the Group Headquarters and Headquarters Company received its Annual General Inspection during the period 1-4 April, the results of which were highly satisfactory. Two of the battalions, the 168th and the 554th, are scheduled for Annual General Inspections during the month of June. The Group Pre-IG team will conduct a two day Pre-IG inspection of each battalion approximately one month prior to the scheduled AGI. Based upon previous experience, it is anticipated that the Pre-IG inspection will provide valuable assistance which will prove beneficial to the two battalions to be inspected.

10. Information: The 79th Engineer Group continued to publish the Pioneer, the Group newspaper, and monthly maintenance notes, as well as monthly Chaplain's Newsletters. Starting in February 1968, the Group compiles and publishes Engineer Field Notes on a monthly basis. Although there was no significant change to the number of Hometown News Releases during the period, the number of contributions of news stories from elements of the command fell off sharply. Action has been taken to establish a target goal of one news release per company size element per week. This program commenced late in the period and a significant increase is anticipated during the next period; renewed command interest has been generated in this field.

11. Civic Affairs: During the reporting period the Group Civic Action Program continued support of MEDCAP and provided technical assistance for battalion civic action officers. The operations during the month of February were hampered by the Tet Offensive. Units were limited in the areas which they could enter. The Civic Action Program is expanding now and within the next two months should be a much more active program than before the Tet Offensive.

B. 66th Engineer Company (Topographic)

1. General: On 31 January 1968 the unit was subjected to a rocket and ground attack as part of the VC Tet Offensive. Operations were halted for three days and were hampered for the entire month of February. The surveyors especially were affected, being unable to take to the field for three weeks. There were no casualties during the quarter. On April 15, Brigadier General Chapman, Commanding General, 20th Engineer Brigade, presented the unit with the Meritorious Unit Citation for the period September 1966 to May 1967.

2. Command: Technical liaison was maintained with II Field Force Vietnam Engineer Section and United States Army Vietnam Engineer. The 66th Engineer Company remains under the administrative control of the

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79th Engineer Group.

3. Personnel, Administration, Morale, and Discipline: During the quarter strength remained high. Administrative reports and records were prepared as needed, including the new Quarterly Operations Report which supersedes our old monthly report. Morale continues to be high as the unit continues its mission of topographic support of the III and IV Corps Tactical Zones. In the quarter, 15 individuals were punished under Article 15 of the UCMJ. There were no trials by Court Martial and no cases of venereal disease were reported.

4. Intelligence and Counterintelligence: None

5. Plans, Operations, and Training: The unit, with the exception of the surveyors, was fully operational throughout the period except for the period of the Tet Offensive, 31 January 1968 to 3 February 1968. The Survey Platoon completed all previously assigned projects related to the Saigon, Bien Hoa mapping projects and all data has been turned in. The Cartographic and Reproduction Platoons were both on a two shift around the clock basis this quarter. Over one million impressions with an average run of 600 per plate were completed by the Reproduction Platoon this quarter. Tactical Scale Studies, uncontrolled and semi-uncontrolled mosaics, Inland Waterways overlays, Road Net Series, and many after action reports, photo print overlays and miscellaneous jobs were completed. Over 30 mosaics in the Saigon, Bien Hoa mapping project were printed and distributed. Work continues on the air-conditioner for the Electrostatic Printer. Continuous on the job training was conducted in all areas. All the perimeter defenses were strengthened this quarter with thousands upon thousands of sand bags being filled. Stand-by power for the Operations Pad was also installed. Five men attended the FADAC Training Course at Phu Loi.

6. Logistics: Several major items of equipment were received this quarter, including the FADAC, all related test equipment and two 3KW generators. The three MC-8's were returned from retrofitting at Granite City Army Depot and we are now awaiting 6 MRA-301's to take the place of all MC-8's. One new photo composing machine was also received. We are now short only two. Topo supply problems have been alleviated through unit action. Special permission was received to visit all the warehouses in the 506th Field Depot. The unit located and picked up 600 reams of paper, over 1,000 cans of developer and innumerable other hard to get topographic supplies. No problems are foreseen except for map paper since the Depot is now out of it completely. 600 reams should last two months.

7. Force Development: N/A

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8. Command Management: N/A

9. Inspector General: The annual AGI inspections were conducted on 13-14 February with an overall rating of satisfactory and many areas rated superior.

10. Information: The Operations Report continues to get worldwide circulation.

11. Civic Affairs: None

C. 100th Engineer Company (Float Bridge)

1. General: During the period 1 February 1968 through 30 April 1968, the 100th Engineer Company (FB) continued to provide float bridge support to tactical units within the 79th Engineer Group's area of responsibility. The unit also continued to support units within the 79th Engineer Group in its secondary mission, that of cargo hauling. For a considerable part of February, this unit actively engaged in the perimeter defense of Camp Frenzell - Jones to suppress the enemy's Tet Offensive.

2. Command: The 100th Engineer Company (FB) remained stationed at Long Binh and attached, for all purposes, to the 79th Engineer Group. First Lieutenant T. E. Bender assumed command from Captain W. T. Gregory, Jr. on 25 February 1968. The following self-help projects were initiated and completed by the 100th Engineer Company (FB) during the quarter:

a. Additional dayroom facilities

b. Seven perimeter defense 5-man bunkers

c. Improvements to EM club

3. Personnel, Administration, Morale, and Discipline: During this reporting period, unit strength decreased slightly, until at the end of the period, the unit is 9% understrength. Morale remained high throughout the reporting period and there were no major disciplinary problems. A rotational hump was experienced in March. The GED program initiated last reporting period has continued to produce gratifying results.

4. Intelligence and Counterintelligence: The 100th Engineer Company (FB) continued to process security clearances, to receive intelligence from 79th Engineer Group and other major supported units, and to report items of intelligence during the reporting period.

5. Plans, Operations, and Training: Operational support was provided

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in the form of bridge materials, technical assistance, and personnal to construct 210' of M4T6 bridge in support of the 65th Engineer Battalion; 2 bridge erection boats and personnel in support of the 15th Engineer Battalion; and a dry span (38'4") in support of the 92nd Engineer Battalion.

The largest operation of the quarter was the support of the 168th Engineer Battalion's mission to bridge the Song Dong Nai with 930' of M4T6 bridge to cross over 150 tracked vehicles. This unit provided 543' of bridge, 36 5-ton bridge trucks, 2 5-ton tool and rigging trucks, 2 20-ton cranes, 2 250 CFM air compressors, 1 wrecker, 1 fuel tanker, 4 27' bridge erection boats, 3 officers and 113 EM. The operation was successfully completed; however, many areas needing attention were uncovered.

Additional support was rendered units of the 79th Engineer Group in the form of general cargo hauling; altogether, 2885 5-ton bridge truck days were provided to 79th Engineer Group in the unit's secondary mission.

Detailed accounts of operational missions performed by the 100th Engineer Company (FB) are contained in attached after action reports.

Continued emphasis on training of unit personnal was given during this reporting period. Range firing has been conducted as a continuing process as well as transitional training on the M-16 rifle.

In addition, from 31 January 1968 to 27 February 1968 a substantial portion of the company was utilized for security force on the perimeter defense of Camp Frenzell - Jones during the enemy's Tet Offensive.

6. Logistics: Logistical support was normal during this period with the following items of special interest:

a. Of the two authorized 210 CFM air compressors, the remaining one was turned in for repair on 5 February 1968 and was scored out on 15 March 1968. Replacements for both were received on 26 April 1968.

b. Of the 10 authorized 27' bridge erection boats, 5 are on hand only 2 of which are operational with no replacements available as of this date.

c. Of the 60 authorized 5 ton bridge trucks, this unit is short two, leaving 58 on hand. As of this date, no replacements are available, while non-bridge units are still being issued this type of truck (i.e., Artillery Units).

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7. Force Development: N/A

8. Command Management: The 100th Engineer Company (FB) continued to offer technical assistance to command and staff of various tactical units supported.

9. Inspector General: N/A

10. Information: The 100th Engineer Company (FB) continued to turn in home town news releases and contributed articles to the 79th Engineer Group's PIO section.

11. Civic Affairs: Food scraps and other edible wastes are continually being donated to the convent of the Holy Cross at Buc Hui, Ho Nai, for use as pig swill. In addition, this unit has adopted the Vien Ciac Pagoda Orphanage as a civic action project and is currently involved in an aggressive building project of a school house and a dispensary.

D. 104th Engineer Company (Dump Truck)

1. General: The 104th Engineer Company (DT) remained stationed at Long Binh in a military area extending along the east side of Route 316 throughout the reporting period. Increased emphasis on hauling during this reporting period precipitated this unit's reorganization for 24 hour a day operation.

2. Command: The 104th Engineer Company (DT) remained attached to the 79th Engineer Group for all purposes.

3. Personnel, Administration, Morale, and Discipline: The company is presently at 170% of its authorized strength. This overstrength is justified by a requirement from higher headquarters to operate on a twenty-four hour basis. The morale of the company remains high even though the men are working long and difficult hours.

4. Intelligence and Counterintelligence: None

5. Plans, Operations, and Training: During this period both 1st and 2nd platoons remained in support of the 588th Engineer Battalion (Combat) during Operation Yellowstone. The 1st Platoon was attached to D Company in Katum for the purpose of upgrading route 4 to Prek Klok and route 246 to Bo Tuc. The 2nd Platoon was attached to B Company at French Fort for the LOC upgrading of TL-4 north to Prek Klok. The 2nd Platoon returned to Long Binh on 18 February 1968. The 1st Platoon returned to Long Binh on 21 February 1968.

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Four vehicles were lost during Operation Yellowstone. One truck was destroyed in an ambush, one by detonating a mine, and two were lost because of cracked frames. Total mileage during Operation Yellowstone was 80,291 miles and total yards hauled was 61,193 cubic yards.

The next operational support mission was to haul crushed rock for the 554th Engineer Battalion Saigon Bypass project. The 2nd Platoon began hauling crushed rock to Cu Chi on 23 February 1968. The 1st Platoon began hauling crushed rock to Cu Chi on 26 February 1968. During this period side boards were installed on all vehicles to increase their load to maximum capacity and eliminate spillage.

During the reporting quarter, the total mileage was 224,856 miles and total yardage was 32,941 cubic yards of bulk material.

During the reporting period the unit continued to reconstruct and resandbag the perimeter alert bunkers. It was learned during Tet that the bunkers were insufficient for this unit's needs.

Monthly command information classes and orientation briefings for newly assigned personnel were held by the Commanding Officer. In addition, four classes were conducted on safety and operational instructions for the multi-fuel M51A2 dump truck at base camp and TDY locations. Monthly character guidance classes were conducted by the 79th Engineer Group Chaplain.

6. Logistics: There is still a problem receiving PLL repair parts through normal requisitioning procedures. The unit has experienced a high deadline rate recently. This is attributed to the adverse working conditions under which the vehicles are presently operating. Also contributing to the deadline rate is the fact that the trucks have been in country over a year.

The supply room was found to have inadequate storage space, especially since some of the conex containers had to be turned in. This unit initiated a project expanding the supply room to provide storage space. The project will be completed in the near future.

7. Force Development: N/A

8. Command Management: N/A

9. Inspector General: N/A

10. Information: None

11. Civic Affairs: None

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E. 500th Engineer Company (Panel Bridge)

1. General: As part of the 79th Engineer Group (Construction), the 500th Engineer Company (PB) remained stationed at Long Binh in Camp Frensell - Jones extending along the east side of Route 316 north of the intersection of routes 15 and 316. In the immediate vicinity of the unit are two other separate companies of the 79th Engineer Group: the 100th Engineer Company (FB) and the 104th Engineer Company (DT).

2. Command: The command of the company passed from Captain James M. Wilkins to Captain Ronald R. Wagner on 25 March 1968.

3. Personnel, Administration, Morale, and Discipline: During the quarterly reporting period, the 500th Engineer Company (PB) maintained high individual morale with few disciplinary problems. There was one court martial and there were two punishments under Article 15, UCMJ. The overall assigned strength remained at an average of 124. This average is three under TOE authorization. This shortage of personnel prevented assigning an assistant driver, or "shotgun", in each dump truck when the unit operates on roads of marginal security, and operates vehicles and drivers 16 to 18 hours per day. Due to a shortage of replacement personnel in MOS 12C20 it has been necessary to assign Combat Engineers, MOS 12A10, to operate organic dump trucks. This arrangement has proved to be most satisfactory. Consideration has been given to requesting authority to hire indigenous civilian personnel to drive dump trucks for this unit. It is envisioned that these civilian drivers would be utilized to drive trucks on primarily administrative, cargo hauling missions in areas that are relatively secure. Minor problems of control would be generated by implementation of this plan, but it is felt that the resulting advantages would override these problems. Military personnel would continue to be utilized as drivers and "shotguns" in insecure areas or on bridge missions and to perform required maintenance.

4. Intelligence and Counterintelligence: The 500th Engineer Company (PB) receives continuous distribution of intelligence documents from Headquarters, 79th Engineer Group and higher headquarters. Requests for granting, validating, and upgrading of security clearances are submitted as needed.

5. Plans, Operations, and Training: During the reporting period the 500th Engineer Company (PB) served both in its primary mission of providing panel bridge support, and its secondary mission of providing dump truck support to the 79th Engineer Group and other units in the III Corp Tactical Zone. Panel bridge missions were as follows:

a. Support of the 4th Transportation Command in the rehabilitation of 80 feet of DS panel bridge. This bridge was unique in that it was

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used to allow passage of vehicular traffic onto a floating barge. The shore end of the bridge was set on normal bearing plates which were imbedded in concrete. The barge end of the bridge was set on bearing plates which were welded to normal base plates. These base plates were then placed on channels welded to the barge. This arrangement was necessary to allow for movement of the barge under the bridge due to tidal actions. After Action Report dated 1[illegible] February 1968 is attached as inclosure #6, pertaining to this mission.

b. Support of the 588th Engineer Battalion with technical assistance in the repair of 60 feet of DS panel bridge and the repair and replacement of both ramps. After Action Report dated 6 March 1968 is attached as inclosure #7, pertaining to this mission.

c. Support of E Company, 1st Engineer Battalion, with technical assistance in the erection of 80 feet of DS panel bridge with 20 foot ramps. Inclosure #8, After Action Report dated 23 March 1968, is attached describing the bridge mission.

d. Support of E Company, 1st Engineer Battalion, in the repair and reinforcement of 40 feet of an existing 90 foot DS panel bridge. Inclosure #9, After Action Report dated 28 March 1968, is attached describing the mission.

e. The 500th Engineer Company (PB), with no outside assistance, erected 120 feet of DD Class 45/55 panel bridge at bridge site XT781133. Inclosure #10, After Action Report dated 1 April 1968, is attached giving description of the mission.

In addition to carrying on its primary mission the 500th Engineer Company (PB) completed the hauling of 15,800 cubic yards of construction material, primarily laterite, sand, and crushed rock, in support of base camp construction, LOC upgrading, and other construction projects.

A one week course of instruction on vehicle operation and maintenance is now being conducted for all replacement personnel. This training is in addition to the normal in-processing and orientations that all new arrivals receive. Results have proven satisfactory as maintenance problems have decreased and operating efficiency has increased.

6. Logistics: Logistical support, including resupply of POL has been adequate, however, a minor problem continues to exist in the area of the Self-Service Supply Center. Normally the Self-Service Supply Center has limited supplies to provide to each unit of this command. With only one day a week allowed per company to shop at Self-Service Supply Center, items or the quantity of items diminish toward the end of the week, thus preventing many units from receiving needed supplies. It is felt that

provisions should be made to keep a well stocked inventory, thereby enabling units to secure needed supplies more readily.

7. Force Development: N/A

8. Command Management: Technical bridge construction advice and assistance was provided by the key members of the unit to the commanders and staffs of the various supported tactical units.

9. Inspector General: N/A

10. Information: The 500th Engineer Company (PB) continued to provide home town news releases and contributed various news articles to the 79th Engineer Group PIO Section.

11. Civic Affairs: The unit is presently in the process of seeking approval for a Donor Deposit Fund to be established to provide support and assistance to a Catholic orphanage in the local town of Ho Nai. Additionally, the unit has recently donated scrap lumber and other construction materials for assistance in the reconstruction of several local residences that were damaged or destroyed during the Tet Offensive.

Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations

a. Personnel.

(1) The Chaplain's role in a higher headquarters under attack.

(a) OBSERVATION. The Chaplain of a unit in defensive posture can enhance morale and improve confidence by spending his time moving from bunker to bunker.

(b) EVALUATION. Personnel assigned to higher headquarters are primarily clerks, drivers, and service personnel. When under attack they function efficiently and effectively because of their basic training. The Tet hostilities opened at this headquarters with a rocket attack followed by a ground assault. The men functioned extremely well and with professional skill. Since the attack proved part of the larger Tet hostilities the alert defensive posture continued for several weeks. Thus the clerks, drivers, and service personnel had nightly guard duties and minimal sleep with utility repairs to accomplish in addition to continuing operational requirements. This dual role requires consideration in order to maintain high morale. The Chaplain of this headquarters made nightly visits to the firing points, towers, and bunkers to encourage fire discipline, to stifle rumors, to raise confidence and to give the

men an opportunity to talk. The Chaplain often took coffee, water, cookies or other refreshments to help the men keep awake and alert. Such efforts were repaid with an increased understanding by the men of their duties and responsibilities. Problem areas were pointed out to the Chaplain and then directed to the Company. The Chaplain's presence should enhance discipline, increase feeling of courage and show command interest in the welfare of the men.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That the Chaplain visit the perimeter defense regularly after checking with the company commander. That Chaplains use these opportunities to stifle rumors, encourage the sentinels and show genuine interest in the men.

(2) Infusion Program.

(a) OBSERVATION. Major personnel losses were experienced in March and April 1968 and replacements for the losses have created serious rotational humps for February and April 1969.

(b) EVALUATION. The major losses during March and April resulted from the one year in country of two battalions, the 554th and the 34th Engineer Battalions. As it was their first year in country, a loss of up to 25% of their strength was authorized within a 30 day period. A partial infusion program spread many of these losses throughout the Group. Replacements, therefore, were received and new rotational humps created. Requisitions for the replacements were for the same months as the departures of the incumbents.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. A carefully planned program is necessary not only to reduce the rotational humps to less than 15% of authorized strength departing within a 30 day period, but also to spread the rotation of personnel evenly throughout the year. Requisitioning of personnel to meet this objective should be closely supervised and meticulously planned at all levels. This program is currently underway in the 79th Engineer Group.

(3) Servicemens' Group Life Insurance.

(a) OBSERVATION. Too many servicemen in the Republic of Vietnam are not taking advantage of the Servicemens' Group Life Insurance.

(b) EVALUATION. In a recent mortar attack a young soldier was killed in action - this young married man had no life insurance policy. Servicemens' Group Life Insurance was available to him at the nominal fee of only two dollars per month to be taken out of his base pay. During his initial in-processing, every man is given the option of taking SGLI by the personnel clerk. Why do so many soldiers refuse this

option? The question is not easily answered nor is it the same in every case; however, a lack of knowledge and understanding are certainly key factors in most instances.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That all unit commanders at all levels of command make it standard policy to fully brief their personnel on the fundamentals of life insurance. Particular emphasis should be placed on the low cost and high rate of return on SGLI.

(4) Need for MTOE.

(a) OBSERVATION. The current TOE of a dump truck company provides an insufficient number of personnel to perform required missions.

(b) EVALUATION. During the reporting period the dump truck company again found that the present TOE called for insufficient personnel to operate in a combat zone. The TOE authorizes 48 dump trucks which require 96 people for safe operation in a combat zone. Under the present TOE, the unit is authorized 72 people to man the 48 vehicles. This creates an impossible situation when attempting to operate and maintain vehicles on a 24 per day basis. The 79th Engineer Group is aware of the problem and has authorized additional personnel for this purpose at the expense of other Group units.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That an MTOE be published for dump truck companies operating in a combat zone. Such an MTOE is currently under study.

b. Operations.

(1) Mine Clearing Devices.

(a) OBSERVATION. Mine warfare in Vietnam, as practiced by the Viet Cong, consists primarily of the placement of scattered mines along a road or trail. To insure that these roads are kept open, a fast, reliable means of discovering and removing the mines must be developed.

(b) EVALUATION. Throughout the III Corp Tactical Zone the enemy has made extensive use of field expedient and manufactured anti-tank and anti-personnel mines to interdict lines of communication and to harass convoys. Usually these mines are not intended to cause extensive damage to the roadway but to slow down and stop convoys and deny the use of the road to the local populace. Sweep teams moving in front of the convoy with standard mine clearing devices are slow and, therefore, cause considerable delay. A temporary measure of using the standard wheeled tractor (290M) to clear brush and earthen road blocks that often

are mined and booby trapped has proven effective; however, this is misuse of a key piece of equipment and could prove to be very costly. Since the beginning of World War II the Corps of Engineers has done considerable research on devices to be attached to the front of standard military equipment which would detonate or detect a mine or explosive device with minimum risk of damage to equipment or injury to personnel. A device of this type is critically needed in Vietnam.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That any available mine clearing device, either a test device or an item of standard issue, be sent to Vietnam for use by troops in the field, and that further research be conducted in this area of vital concern.

(2) Field Location of Battalion Headquarters.

(a) OBSERVATION. There is little apparent need for the relocation of a battalion headquarters to a field location, even if the entire battalion is in a close combat support posture.

(b) EVALUATION. During Operation Yellowstone the 588th Engineer Battalion relocated its headquarters to a field location to provide engineer support to the 25th Infantry Division. This proved to be an undesireable situation. The support area was located only fifty (50) kilometers from the normal base camp of the battalion, and all support came to the battalion through normal channels. The great bulk of administrative and logistical burden was handled in the same manner as if the battalion were in a normal operational status. The movement of the battalion headquarters to the field caused an already overburdened communications system to be taxed beyond its capability, caused the complete disruption of the normal flow of information particularly in the logistical field, and created a situation in the material readiness of the battalion that was totally unsatisfactory.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That during operations within close proximity of its home base camp (i.e., up to 150 km) a battalion headquarters should remain at that base. If a battalion "forward" is required, it should consist of no more than a small operational nucleus.

(3) Convoy Control in Congested Areas.

(a) OBSERVATION. Civilian vehicles in congested areas continually attempt to pass through the vehicle line thereby jeopardizing their safety and causing large gaps in the convoy. Additionally, these civilian vehicles attempt to pass convoys simultaneously on both the left and right sides of the road.

(b) EVALUATION. A whistle, used by the convoy commander, has

been found to be most effective to control civilian traffic during convoy operations. Civilian drivers respond readily to the sound of a whistle and little, if at all, to the sound of a truck horn.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That the use of a whistle to control civilian traffic that is interfering with a convoy become standard practice.

(4) Authorization of a Fuel Tanker in Panel Bridge Companies.

(a) OBSERVATION. The lack of a fuel tanker as part of the TOE of a panel bridge company seriously hampers efficient operations.

(b) EVALUATION. When this unit is engaged in extensive hauling operations a considerable amount of valuable maintenance time is lost at the end of each day by having all of the unit vehicles assemble at a central, post operated, POL refueling point. This is necessitated because this unit is not authorized a tanker even though its secondary mission is the hauling of construction material and general cargo.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That consideration be given to authorizing panel bridge companies one 1200 gallon fuel tanker.

(5) Combat Engineer Vehicle.

(a) OBSERVATION. Current combat engineer support roles in Vietnam require a piece of engineer equipment which would provide the engineers with security for sweep teams; or, where security is provided, to move at a rate consistent with the rate of march of the security force.

(b) EVALUATION. Current engineer operations in support of tactical forces in Vietnam require engineer work crews (up to platoon size strength) to operate with minimum security in areas of frequent enemy ambush. The current TOE of the non-divisional combat battalion does not allow for the combat engineer vehicle. This vehicle would be a great asset in providing security, rapid cross country mobility, rapid means of road block removal while affording protection from small arms and anti-personnel mines, and a means for assaulting and neutralizing enemy field fortifications.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That a Combat Engineer Vehicle be assigned the non-divisional combat engineer battalion on the basis of one per combat company.

(6) Secure Means of Communications.

(a) OBSERVATION. The requirement exists for a secure means of

communication between Group Headquarters and subordinate units

(b) EVALUATION. During the Viet Cong Tet Offensive all means of communication except voice radio was cut off. This greatly hampered the operation of the Group, particularly in the area of classified projects. Classified traffic had normally been handled by couriers, but the insecure condition of the local road net and higher priority demands for available helicopter time prevented normal courier service from taking place. The use of teletype with on line cryptographic facilities would greatly enhance the ability of the Group to carry out its assigned missions with minimum disruption due to enemy activity.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That the Group Headquarters and all subordinate battalions obtain necessary equipment to set up and operate a secure radio teletype net.

(7) S-3 Duty Officer.

(a) OBSERVATION. The need exists for an S-3 Duty Officer during periods of increased readiness.

(b) EVALUATION. During periods of increased readiness (i.e., increased guard stature or anticipation of enemy action) the normal staff duty officer is not qualified to handle the increased activity that occurs in the operations center. For this reason, an officer from the S-3 section was detailed to remain in the Group Operations Center during the hours of darkness to provide an immediate answer for any operational question that arises.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That any time the Group Headquarters is placed on increased readiness an officer from the S-3 be detailed to act as the duty operations officer.

(8) Use of Terrain Detachment and TOPO Company.

(a) OBSERVATION. The Group Headquarters S-3 Section does not make full use of the services of the Terrain Detachment and Engineer Company (TOPO) when performing reconnaissance of work sites, rivers, and roads.

(b) EVALUATION. This Group currently has immediately available the resources of the 517th Engineer Detachment (Terrain) and the 66th Engineer Company (TOPO). Within the resources of these two units exists considerable map and photographic coverage of most of the area in which the Group would have to operate. Since aircraft are critical, a complete ground reconnaissance is usually impossible; therefore, maximum use should be made of the resources available at these two units.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS. That the Group Operations Section maintain constant liaison with the terrain detachment and the TOPO Company and that maximum use be made of information available to supplement ground reconnaissance of future mission sites.

(9) Sandbagging of Vehicles.

(a) OBSERVATION. Vehicles which have been hardened with sandbags often save lives.

(b) EVALUATION. During Operation Yellowstone, the personnel of this unit learned the importance of properly sandbagging a vehicle. The unit lost a total of four trucks due to land mines. Three trucks were a total loss; however, sandbagging prevented injury to any of the personnel.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That it be SOP for operational units to insure all vehicles are properly sandbagged.

(10) Engineer Support.

(a) OBSERVATION. Engineer support to tactical units in Vietnam can best be obtained by a mix of engineer units.

(b) EVALUATION. When providing engineer support to an infantry division, the combination of one (1) construction battalion and one (1) combat battalion has proven to be most effective. Specifically the construction battalion can provide base construction support, lines of communication upgrading, and back up equipment support. The combat battalion can provide support to combat operations, lines of communication repair and maintenance, and provide back up support on less sophisticated base construction projects. This system allows a greater degree of flexibility, provides better engineer support to the customer, and permits more efficient utilization of engineer resources.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That each division zone have one (1) combat and one (1) construction battalion.

c. Training.

(1) Training of Bridge Specialists.

(a) OBSERVATION. Bridge personnel must be kept trained in the primary field of bridging, even though they may be conducting alternate missions such as convoys.

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(b) EVALUATION. This headquarters had the mission of crossing an armored task force of over 150 vehicles over a float bridge 930' long under extremely hazardous conditions. It became apparent from the start that the personnel in the bridge company (particularly the boat operators) were not skilled in their MOS. The lack of skill occurred primarily because since their arrival in country they had spent the majority of their time conducting convoys utilizing their bridge trucks, It was also found that personnel in the combat companies were very weak in the conduct of bridging operations.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That periodic bridge training be conducted to insure that personnel in the combat battalions and the bridge companies are well versed in the science of constructing float bridge. An aggressive bridge training program is currently being implemented.

(2) Boat Operator Training.

(a) OBSERVATION. The only method of obtaining power boat operators is through on-the-job training.

(b) EVALUATION. It has been observed that the only area in the US Army where formal instruction on the operation of the 27-foot Bridge Erection Boat is conducted is at the Seventh Army Engineer School, where a three week course of instruction is given. This unit has ten (10) such boats authorized by TOE and the only method available to train operators is by giving a Bridge Specialist (MOS 12C30) on-the-job training. What usually happens is that a light truck driver is given the additional duty of power boat operator. Even though each platoon is able to place two boats in the water at least monthly, sufficient operator training cannot be achieved. Normally only enough time is permitted for operational checks and maintenance, thus resulting in the operator receiving training only on boat operation without being able to push a raft. Even if a full day is utilized for this training and bridge is available for use in the training, it usually is still insufficient due to the fact that lack of security means only enough time is permitted to assemble and disassemble the raft, not permitting the boat operator sufficient time to learn necessary hand signal commands or to experience pushing the raft for considerable lengths of time. In addition, much of our time in Vietnam is taken up by convoy operations thus forcing boat operators to be primarily truck drivers.

(c) RECOMMENDATION.

(1) That a formal course of instruction be established, as an addition to Advanced Individual Training for MOS 12C20, which combines both boat operation and boat maintenance (now positions of 62B20) for a five week course of instruction.

(2) That the most outstanding trainees in MOS 12C20 be retained at the training units and given this additional five week course of instruction, and on completion, be awarded an MOS of 12C30.

(3) That MOS 12C30 be authorized the rank of Specialist Fifth Class in the TOE.

(3) Safety During Rocket or Mortar Attacks.

(a) OBSERVATION. There are more injuries due to carelessness during night mortar and rocket attacks than due to enemy action.

(b) EVALUATION. Recent mortar and rocket attacks during conditions of darkness have resulted in an alarming number of injuries to personnel that might have been easily avoided if simple rules had been adhered to during the attack. The initiation of an attack, whether signalled by incoming rounds or by the alarm siren, triggers off a stampede to the mortar bunkers. Running in the dark, often without boots, is hazardous at best, and when coupled with diving into a mortar bunker which is about four feet deep and three feet wide the action becomes downright foolhardy. Lying on the floor under a bed inside a building that has sandbagged walls offers considerably more protection than does the exposed run from the billets to the bunker. After the incoming rounds have ceased, personnel can move to the mortar bunkers in an orderly manner with boots on and await further attacks or an all-clear.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That all personnel be instructed to move to mortar bunkers only after the incoming rounds have stopped falling, and that they do not run to the bunkers during hours of darkness.

d. Intelligence. None

e. Logistics.

(1) Dispersion of Class IV Stocks.

(a) OBSERVATION. There is insufficient dispersion of Class IV construction and fortification materiel.

(b) EVALUATION. During and after the Tet Offensive, when convoy movement was curtailed through Saigon and other areas into 1st and 25th Division areas, a critical lack of construction materials resulted temporarily for projects underway in these areas. The shortage of this type of item was more prolonged than that for other classes of supply, becauseof the lower priority placed on transportation of Class IV materials. For the 79th Engineer Group, almost all Class IV must be transported from Long Binh. Stocks at Tay Ninh, Dau Tieng, Cu Chi, Phu Loi and Di An are primarily for divisional units.

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(c) RECOMMENDATION. Critical Class IV supply items (e.g., sand bags, concertina, culvert, heavy timber, poneprime) should be dispersed in Class IV supply points located closer to tactical units in the field. Establishment of a Class II and IV supply point at Phu Loi is being recommended under separate cover.

(2) Forecast of Class IV.

(a) OBSERVATION. Several Class IV items are in chronically critical short supply or subject to wide surges in availability (critical shortage followed by excessive stocks): heavy timber, large culvert, asphalt products, cement and sandbags are example items.

(b) EVALUATION. Forecasts of selected Class IV items are required of using units, up to a year or more in advance. Some of these forecasts have not been matched by deliveries. Long range forecasts of this type are highly subject to change, as projects are modified and priorities shifted. In addition, operational support mission requirements are extremely difficult to forecast accurately, due to the spontaneity of the requirement for such missions. In some cases, even when accurate forecasts were made, units failed to submit timely requests for their required materials. In other cases, materials were not available in the depot at the time required.

(c) RECOMMENDATION.

(1) Forecasts must be continuously updated for materials deemed key to upcoming projects. Units must submit requests and follow up their requests on a timely basis; a forecast is not a request for issue. Implementing instructions have been issued to 79th Engineer Group units.

(2) A system of continuous monitoring by USARV and 1st Logistical Command should be instituted, to identify items for which forecasted requirements exceed proposed supply, and to revise supply schedules accordingly.

(3) Failure of 5-Ton Multifuel Engines.

(a) OBSERVATION. Excessive failures of the 5-ton multifuel engine were experienced during the reporting period.

(b) EVALUATION. This problem was analyzed, with particular attention paid to engine mileage, manufacturer, and number of days in the DSU. Of 42 engine failures considered, 21 were original engines. They failed after an average of 20,310 miles. The 21 replacements, of which at least 3/4 were rebuilt engines, failed after an average of only 5,082 miles. Among rebuilt engines, it appears that Hercules engines are

more failure-prone than Continental engines. Additional command emphasis has been placed on proper operation and maintenance of these engines.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That the above data be taken under advisement by USAMECOM.

(4) Replacement of Major Items.

(a) OBSERVATION. Excessive delays have been incurred in the replacement of several major items.

(b) EVALUATION. Major items have been lost through accidents, thefts, combat damage, and the combined effects of age and lack of repair parts. In the latter case, items are turned in for evacuation. This has been a very significant category of losses. Insufficient depot stock has caused using units to be without mission-essential items for many months. Specific examples are D7E tractors, 5-ton dump trucks, and 250 CFM air compressors.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Replacement factors currently in use should be studied and revised based on experience in this war. Since many items are lost through lack of repair parts, a review of the causes for these parts shortages should be conducted.

(5) Shortages of Direct Exchange Items.

(a) OBSERVATION. Using units are not authorized to increase their stock of DX items beyond the level established by the applicable TM, regardless of the number of demands. This level is normally set at one each, on the assumption that the DSU will replace the item immediately from stock items rebuilt by the DSU. At this time, units within this Group have over 300 outstanding direct exchange tags from their supporting DSU. The direct support units do not have the items, nor do they have the rebuild kits for the items.

(b) EVALUATION. Since units are not authorized to stock DX items based on demands, they have to rely on sources outside normal supply channels to keep vehicles operational. When doing this, units begin to hoard the parts, which compounds the problems of re-supply to other units. Consequently, some units have deadlined vehicles awaiting DX parts while other units have these parts available.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. None. This headquarters has informed 29th General Support Group of the problem. They are investigating the situation at this time.

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f. Organization.

(1) Shortage of Aircraft.

(a) OBSERVATION. The need for rotary winged aircraft for command and control, resupply, and reconnaissance cannot be met under the current support system.

(b) EVALUATION. This headquarters is currently charged with the responsibility of exercising command and control (to include OPCON) over two combat battalions and two construction battalions spread over a 7000 square mile area. To exercise effective control, to perform required resupply missions and to perform necessary ground and air reconnaissance would require twenty-four (24) UH-1D days per week. This requirement is more important when the availability of captains (48%) and average time of service of company grade officers is considered (1½ years). Currently approximately 60% of this requirement is being provided. It is recognized that this is done by providing maximum support from resources available. This does not, however, change the basic requirement which would allow for the maximum effective use of the engineer resources within the Group.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That the Group Headquarters be authorized an Aviation Section which would remain under Group control for all purposes. This would ideally be an air section similar to the TOE air section for a Combat Group.

JOHN H. ELDER JR.
Colonel, CE
Commanding

~~13 Incls~~
~~1 - Organization Chart~~
~~2 - Overlay of 79th Engr Gp Area of Operations~~
~~3 - Overlay of 79th Engr Gp Physical Location~~
~~4 - Construction Projects, 79th Engr Gp~~
~~5 - After Action Report (Bridge Mission at XS887893)~~
~~6 - After Action Report (Bridge Mission at XT238512)~~
~~7 - After Action Report (Bridge Mission at XS898942)~~
~~8 - After Action Report (Bridge Mission at XT737332)~~
~~9 - After Action Report (Bridge Mission at XT781133)~~
~~10 - After Action Report - Resupply of Company "B", 168th Engr Bn (CBT)~~
~~11 - After Action Report - Support of the 94th Engr Bn~~
~~12 - After Action Report - Support of 588th Engr Bn~~
~~13 - After Action Report - Support of Company E, 65th Engr Bn, 25th Inf Div~~

Withdrawn, HQ, DA

AVBI-OS (14 May 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 79th Engineer Group (Construction) for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65(R1).

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 20TH ENGINEER BRIGADE, APO SF 96491

TO: Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVHEN-HO, APO 96375

1. Submitted in accordance with USARV Regulation 525-15, dated 13 April 1968.

2. This headquarters concurs with the OKLL submitted by the 79th Engineer Group except Section I, paragraph A6, "Logistics": Add one each bridge erection boat and 4 each ¾ ton trucks to items lost as a result of enemy action and not replaced to date.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

RICHARD E. TAYLOR
1LT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant

Copy Furnished:
CO, 79th Engr Gp

AVHGC-DST (14 May 68) 2d Ind CPT Arnold/ms/LBN 4485
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 79th Engineer Group (Construction) for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 6 JUL 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 79th Engineer Group.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning mine clearing devices, page 19, paragraph b(1): Concur. Vehicle mounted mine detectors will be issued to some of the Engineer Troop units in the near future, based on recommendations of the field forces.

b. Reference item concerning authorization of a fuel tanker in panel bridge companies, page 21, paragraph b(4). Request for the 1200 gallon tanker with justification should be submitted as MTOE action IAW DA Circular 310-44, dated 5 November 1967.

c. Reference item concerning combat engineer vehicle, page 21, paragraph b(5). If the requirement is valid MTOE should be submitted by the unit IAW DA Circular 310-44, dated 5 November 1967.

d. Reference item concerning boat operator training, page 24, paragraph c(2); and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2: Concur. This command continues to experience requisition shortfall of personnel trained in MOS 12C30. In order to meet in-country requirements for MOS 12C30, personnel holding MOS 12C30 must be trained in RVN to serve as power boat operators. This training has proved to be a cumbersome and impractical task, therefore, every effort should be taken by DA to insure that AIT output include personnel who are trained in the operation and maintenance of the 27 foot Bridge Erection Boat.

e. Reference item concerning forecast of Class IV, page 26, paragraph e(2): Nonconcur. A system of monitoring requirements of selected Class IV items is in effect at this headquarters. Adjustments are made based on updated information and action is taken to effect changes in supply schedules through 1st Logistical Command. Current systems are considered adequate.

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f. Reference item concerning replacement of major item, page 27, paragraph e(4): Nonconcur. Replacement factors in use for equipment in this command are based on experience gained in RVN and are periodically reviewed and adjusted. Replacement factors for D7E tractors and 250 CFM compressors were reviewed as recently as March 1968. There is a critical shortage of 5 ton dump trucks in USARV and procurement schedules have slipped. Availability forecasts for this item cannot be made at this time. A recent change in the repair parts stockage policy at DSU/GSU level should result in increased availability of repair parts.

g. Reference item concerning shortage of aircraft, page 28, paragraph e(5). The standardized MTOE now at DA for approval proposes that the 79th Engineer Group be authorized an aviation section. If the MTOE is approved, the unit will be issued aircraft and aviators sometime during the 2d or 3d quarter of calendar year 1969.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

John V. Getchell

JOHN V. GETCHELL
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Copies furnished:
HQ, 79th Engr Gp
HQ, 20th Engr Bde

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GPOP-DT (14 May 68) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 79th Engr Gp (Const) for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 19 JUL 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

K. F. OSBOURN
MAJ. AGC
Asst AG

37 The following items are recommended for inclusion in the Lessons Learned Index:

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35 Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION For Official Use Only 2b. GROUP Cancelled 4 July 1969

3. REPORT TITLE

Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Hq, 79th Engineer Gp (Const) (U)

4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)

Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations. 1 Feb - 30 Apr 68

5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)

CO, 79th Engineer Group

6. REPORT DATE 14 May 1968	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 33	7b. NO. OF REFS
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) 682316	
b. PROJECT NO. N/A		
c.	9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
d.		

10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A	12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310

13. ABSTRACT

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DD FORM 1 NOV 68 1473

UNCLASSIFIED
Security Classification